575 are reassured by the fact that they are in a group, so that no one feels
834 singled out by the gaze of the passer-by. Washing away from major streams is always surrounded by more propriety. For this purpose a
[343] small enclosure (ikomba) is built behind the hut or among the banana trees, or a small thicket is allowed to grow there. By this means the native is sheltered from indiscreet glances if he wants to take a
[57] bath or give himself an enema. As a matter of fact these things are done preferably after dark.

834 5) Violent anger or sorrow drown out modesty, just as they
152 momentarily destroy the use of reason and suppress all feelings which are contradictory or simply different. In this situation, too, the man shows himself superior to the woman. He is less impulsive, calmer, less prone to lose control of his actions, to be carried away by his anger. Thus he almost never strips himself bare. The woman, on the other hand, readily strips off all her clothing. This behavior is extremely common; a woman undresses completely whenever she experiences great sorrow or intense anger. Luckily for propriety's sake some friend or relative always hastens to cover at least the essential parts. For a woman who throws off her clothing exposes herself to the mockery and jeers of spectators. (1)

[593] [578]

1. An angry woman may also undress to shame her husband; it is a way of insulting and mocking him.

833 6) The Nkundó practice sexual intercourse only at night. I believe that this custom is due to their sense of propriety, [57] supplemented by a superstitious explanation which will be described in detail in Article V.

593 834 7) The sense of modesty has its fullest expression in relation to parents, brothers, sisters, etc. Thus it is unheard of that a son should see his mother naked: bɔ̂na ɛ́fɛnɛ́kɛ́ ɛ̂sumvɛ́ nvangó. If an adult daughter is ill and requires personal care (such as an enema, for example), the father has to take care of her himself if no other female relative is near by. But their sense of modesty is such that they both shed tears over the event. As a matter of fact this situation

Article III. Relations between Spouses; Their Various Rights and Duties

973x 833 Spouses are obliged to fulfill the duties and perform the tasks incumbent upon them.

It is difficult to say just how far the sense of duty to fulfill the debitum conjugale extends among the Nkundó. Normally, they very frequently fulfill this obligation toward each other. But after a good quarrel they abstain, either through mutual consent or because [926] one of them refuses. If one of the parties fails seriously and repeatedly in this respect, the question is resolved by a divorce. The response to temporary lapses is limited to reprimands, disputes, blows, and other common reactions. It should be added that continence is required [934] during the *ekelé* period after the birth of a child and after setting up a new hunting enclosure (lokombo) or a new fishing weir (bosaka), before the third piece of a game or fish is caught.

1. Meals

595x 264 A couple never take their meals together. The husband eats the food prepared for him and served to him by his wife alone, with his grown sons, or with friends or relatives. The wife herself eats with her small children, her daughters, or her female relatives. The two sexes never mingle at meals.

593x 521 The same rule applies to talks, but it is much less strictly maintained; it is not rare to find that, for one reason or another, women participate in the conversation of men.

It will not be long before, through the influence of Christianity, [268] women will generally be admitted in the conversations of the opposite sex. Developments with respect to mixed meals will come with much more difficulty; in practice the question has not even been broached.

593x 340 [346] Thus one finds a kitchen next to the bedroom or separated from the hut; in addition to being the place where food is prepared, it is where the woman spends her day. The kitchen is sometimes a structure separated from the dwelling itself, sometimes a part of the house separated from the bedroom by a partition containing a door.

573 Polygamists as well as some monogamists have a kind of shed where
343 they receive their friends, take care of their affairs, eat their meals, etc. (1)

1. Such a shed is called esamba by the Bombwanja, ingómba by the other tribes. The Beloko, like the Ntómbé and Bolíngé located between the Congo and the Boloko, say bongómbo. The Ekonda say ewénga.

(626) A man who is frequently found in the kitchen or who likes to rest there is the butt of ridicule by both men and women. He is called ikómbelinga (derived from bolinga, "smoke," and kómba, "to dodge; to turn the head away in order to protect the eyes against smoke").

2. Illness

573 A wife is required to nurse her husband if he is ill, together
758 with his other wives if he is polygamous and, in case of serious illness, with the aid of his female relatives (mother, sisters). Even if they are married and living at a distance, they come to take care of a brother or son; it behooves their husbands to be reasonable and not to try and forbid their absence or prevent this exercise of their duty, for otherwise a man runs a great risk of seeing his wife leave him for good, outraged by this demonstration of his lack of affection for her family.

Together the wives and relatives seek medications and prepare the appropriate potions.

When a wife is ill the husband's female relatives usually come to see her, console her, and administer what care they are capable of giving; as a rule they are well disposed toward the wife of their son, brother, etc. The husband, for his part, must seek medications and help his sick wife. I recall a great palaver apropos of this question. During the illness of his wife Efeuf, a certain Bokangé continuously had relations in his hut with another woman. The matter became public. The guilty husband was

846 In order to facilitate the flowing out of all the blood, the
515 mother is given hot baths. However, they are not begun before noon, for the Nkundó say that in the morning and evening it is too cool and the blood is not sufficiently fluid. Those who have been
[177] in greater contact with the Whites give the mother beer or wine to
●843 drink. The hot baths are administered behind the hut in an enclosure set up for the occasion. They are of two kinds: baths by sprinkling (bompúlo wǎ mbǎomba) and steam baths (bompúlo w'ɛlɛngɛ́). For the first method [485] very hot water is used, and by using a bunch of palms, the woman's abdomen, loins, and ribs are sprinkled. In the second method a pit is dug and large leaves (or a basin) containing boiling water are placed in it. Three or four strong, wide sticks are placed on top, and the woman is seated on them. She is wrapped in several mats to which, today, one or two blankets are added. She is left thus exposed to the action of the steam for several minutes. According to the natives, it is the ideal system because it makes all the blood come out, or almost all. Some people first give a sprinkle bath, and then follow it with a steam bath; others are satisfied with one or the other, depending on the circumstances. In any case more than one bath is never given in one day. This care may be given for one or two weeks, or it may stop after two or three days. The effect of "civilizing" is more inclined to the latter. But no Nkundó would want to omit the baths, for the woman's life is at stake.

After the bath the woman is carefully rubbed and dried,
[302] and then anointed with oil mixed with red paint.

From time to time, usually every second day, she is given a douche.

846 As long as the mother remains weak, a large fire is maintained in her hut to keep her warm, and the doors are closed by means of palms. The husband and his relatives fetch the firewood. But the first log must be cut and brought by the husband who, to use the Nkundó expression, must "remove the violence" (ímola lofasó. In the beginning the woman lies down on a bofinga right near the fire. She turns the front of her body toward it. The fire plays a great role in her quick recovery. She is very well cared

845 However, these names are not used exclusively by such persons;
551 they may be given to others as well. The father, on the other hand, does not receive a new name; but he bears the title Is'éy'ăfé, which literally means "father of two." (1) Twins are also said to

1. Among the Ekonda he is called Buka.

be Ămbámba (pl. Byămbámba) from the verb -ámba, "to accept, to receive," because they are permitted to accept and to take everything, since none of the usual prohibitions apply to them.

The mother of twins is not required to go into seclusion
845 (nyang'éy'aása áfóáte waékelé). The shed belonging to the head
343 of the clan, that is, the one in whose home important animals (leopards, etc.) are dismembered, is set up for her. (2) The shed

2. Therefore, at the bonsenge place or the place of dismembering important animals (nyama yă bikofo, literally "superb animals").

is closed by means of palms. Neither the parents, nor the helper, nor the persons who enter this place are required to observe continence or the other prohibitions involved in ekelé.

All the members of the kin group come to greet the twins
845 and give each one a present (hens, knives, arrows, food), which is received by the father or the mother. Whenever anything is given to one of the twins, even if it is the smallest object, the same must be given to the other; otherwise the latter would die. If the mother takes one in her arms, the other one must also be picked up, either by her or by the father. If she strikes one, she must also strike his brother. This [503] duality therefore applies to everything, and with even greater reason to nursing.

If a twin child cries or is ill, the parents must sing and
[534] dance to the accompaniment of a lokolé and a ngòmo drum, a ceremony called -bénga baása. If someone invites a twin or his

624 and that he may have no more than a month or perhaps a year in which to live and will surely die speedily.

The special objects attaching to the office of *nkumu*, among these the hat, *montolo*, and stool, *mbata*, are at the same time subject to similar magical arts to determine whether they may be produced for the new *nkumu*'s use. They are not present, being in the possession of the *molembe* which will appoint him, but are mentioned by name. Apart from the *montolo*, no further ceremony is required to identify these objects with their future owner.

[309] The *mingo* ended, the *Nkema Akuku* smears black *mbili* all over his body again, 624 before the rites begin to determine which of his wives is to be known as *Nsono*, 787 the one who will be closest to her husband throughout his days. For this, magic formulae (*bienzako*, sing. *enzako*) are used. All the wives sit round in a circle and the *nkanga* places some irritant such as ground pepper in the eyes of all the women. The wife whose eyes stream most and whose discomfort is also accompanied by a violent [827] shaking of the body is known to be *Nsono*. Here again, lying is believed to be out of the question, for the shaking of the body is something that is supposed to be impossible of simulation, the real being easily distinguished by all from the false. *Nsono* is now stripped of all clothing and her body smeared by the *nkanga* with yellow clay on one side, and with white on the other. A belt of leaves is put round her waist 624 and a small bit of cloth between the legs with each end attached to the belt. Near by 789 a gourd with 'medicine' in it has been standing ready for the next step in the ceremonies, and this is now smeared with white clay, a parrot's feather stuck in the neck, and handed to *Nsono*, who receives it in one hand. Into the other hand is put a section of plantain stalk, into one end of which has been stuck a parrot's feather. A third feather is placed in her mouth so that she cannot speak, greet anyone, or eat. She is now tied with a cord which is held by one of the young men attending *Nkema Akuku*. At this point of the procedure the *nkanga* states his price [791] for his work, which will be in the neighbourhood of one hundred brass rods, worth 435 to-day about fifty francs, but formerly double that amount. The future *nkumu*, accompanied as before, leaves for the village of the *molembe*. *Nsono* starts off at a tremendous pace, for she is now imbued with a sort of frenzied strength, and for this reason has been tied up and put in charge of a strong young man, otherwise she would be off so fast that no one could catch her, and would go into the forest, where she would live for days unseen.

624 In the village of the *molembe* the party all sit in an *ebanga* belonging to one of the elders. This is the place where the Tumba men really live—their houses are just [343] sleeping and cooking establishments, but the *ebanga*, having a roof for shade and no walls, is the place where the men congregate and spend their leisure time. It is also 342 the site of the village smithy, which takes up one end. Here, then, *Nkema Akuku* and [962] his party sit for a day and a night, and neither he nor *Nsono* may eat food or drink wine during this period. Games are played by the *molembe*—mock battles, dances, and [517] songs chiefly of battle, and before the first streaks of dawn appear the group in the *ebanga* begins to march up and down the village singing.

At dawn the whole party, accompanied by a large crowd, make their way to a place in the bush where there is an elevation of some sort. Here *Nkema Akuku* climbs up and takes his stand, accompanied by *Nsono*. Now the *molembe* choose the *Bilepa*